

Greetings Tina,
and welcome to the world of Bob Dylan. As you listen to these seven tapes you will soon (hopefully) discover that Bob Dylan is not just another singer-songwriter or even just another singer. This collection traces his music from folk and blues singer to topical (and political) singer-songwriter, to personal songs that go beneath the surface to absurdist symbolist rock poet to mythical tale-teller, to country crooner, to family man, back to rock poet and story teller to evangelical preacher prophet and back once again to rock poet to folksinger (though that last part will be for another time).

As you will also hear, along the way Dylan experimented with all kinds of music from folk to blues to rock to country to gospel with tips of the hat along the way to Mexican and Spanish music and a dash of gypsy craziness.

Without Dylan, music would not be what it is today and Bruce Springsteen for instance would not be Bruce Springsteen (at least not as we know him) -- a fact he is only too happy to acknowledge. Dylan took all the above forms, blended them, mixed them, merged them and turned them inside out, but always acknowledging one way or another (sometimes only emotionally) the source.

Along the way he also experimented with his own songs often to the alarm and consternation of both his fans and his critics. He's never been afraid to change lyrics, melodies or arrangements which is why a few songs here are repeated. He never sings anything the same way twice. One writer wrote a book about this called "Performed Literature." The book wasn't too good, but the premise was correct. He can change the meaning of a song with the slightest twist of a phrase or change of his voice.

As you listen, you will also (hopefully) realize that Dylan (despite typical comments about his voice) is an amazing singer. Few touch his depth of emotion or his passion. You will also notice that his voice consistently changes. It has rarely been the same on any two records. I've put on a couple of my personal favorites to showcase his singing notably "Moonshiner," "Please Mrs. Roosevelt," and "Wild Mountain Thyme." All are totally different. In "Mrs. Roosevelt" for instance, he changes key 3 or 4 times. But there's also the almost Hebraic or is it Egyptian quality of "One More Cup Of Coffee," or the sad mood of "Tangled Up In Blue," a version that was originally supposed to be on the *Blood On The Tracks* but was replaced at the last minute.

To give you an idea of what Dylan was like in person early in his career, I included two tracks "I Don't Believe You" and "If You Gotta Go" from his concert at Philharmonic (now Avery Fisher) Hall on Halloween '64, a show I was lucky enough to attend.

I could go on and on, but I think you get the idea. Anyway, this'll give you an excuse to e-mail me if you have any questions.

Merry Christmas!
Peter